

578. Bundling. One of the most extraordinary Instances of what the mores can do to legitimize a custom which, when rationally judged, seems inconsistent with the most elementary requirements of the sex taboo, is bundling. In Latin Europe generally, especially amongst the upper classes, it is not allowed that a young man and a young woman shall be alone together even by day, and the freer usage in England, and still more in the United States, is regarded as improper and contrary to good manners. In the latter countries two young people, if alone together, do not think of transgressing the rules of propriety as set by custom in the society. Such was the case also with night visits. Although the custom was free, and although better taste and judgment have abolished it, yet it was *defined* and regulated, and was never a proof of licentious manners. It is found amongst uncivilized people, but is hardly to be regarded as a survival in higher civilization. Christians, in the third and fourth centuries,<sup>1</sup> practiced it, even without the limiting conditions which were set in the Middle Ages. Having determined to renounce sex, as an evil, they sought to test themselves by extreme temptation. It was a test or proof of the power of moral rule over natural impulse.<sup>2</sup> " It was a widely spread custom in both the east and the west of the Roman empire to live with virgins. Distinguished persons, including one of the greatest bishops of the empire, who was also one of the greatest theologians, joined in the custom. Public opinion in the church judged them lightly, although unfavorably." <sup>3</sup> " After the church took on the episcopal constitution, it persecuted and drove out the *subintroductae*.

They were regarded as a survival from the old church which was disapproved. The custom that virgins dwelt in the house with men arose in the oldest period of the Christian church."<sup>4</sup> " They did not think of any evil as to be apprehended/<sup>1</sup> In fact, we have only a little clear evidence that the living together did not correspond in the long run to the assumptions on which

<sup>1</sup> Achelis, *Virgines Subintroductae* ^ 4.

<sup>2</sup> Harnack, *Pseudo-Clement. Briefe de Virginitate* ; Cyprian, *JZpist. IV'ad Pompon* (c. 250 A.D.); Achelis, *Virgines Subintroductae*; Julicher in *Archiv fur Religionswssnsft* ^ VII, 372. <sup>8</sup> Achelis, 12. \* /&</., 74.